[Shri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare]

fully associate with what the hon. Member has said. I aslo condemn it. It is our first duty to protect the judiciary.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, it is very serious.

Wasteful Expenditure by certain person occupying high public posts in the Country

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM (Andhra Pradesh): Thank you, Madam....

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): When the discussion starts, is the Minister going to be present?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, the Minister is there...(*Interruptions*). It was agreed that at 12.15 we start. Now, I have five names: it will take about ten minutes.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: We could take it afterwards.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, let us not be that harsh, Mr. Dipen Ghosh. They are all Members of this House. Let me finish it. The Minister is there.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Can it be finished in five minutes?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He will take only two minutes. Now, two minutes for everyone I call.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Madam Deputy Chairman, I am referring to an interpolation,, I asked.... (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have some patience, Mr. Ghosh. I have no objection. You will be earning their displeasure and I don't want them to be angry with you, not on the last day.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You are giving preference to mention of certain mundane matters.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you think what Mr. Padmanabham is saying is a mundane matter? I doubt.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: It was disallowed on a specious plea that the question is vague. I strongly feel that the question I put is in the best interest of the country and the information I sought relates to alert the public opinion as to how the tax-payers' money is being misused and wasted by some people occuping the highest position in the Government, particularly at a time when the country is passing through financial crisis. As I have no other recourse to bring this matter to the notice of this august House, I sought your permission to mention about it and you were kind enough to permit me to do so, and I must thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please come to the issue. Don't waste your time in other things.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: It has come to my notice that a very important functionary who occupies the highest position in the Government of this country not only in terms of precedence, in the heirarchy of the administration, but, Madam, this particular gentleman is entrusted with the task which is crucial and vital to the democratic processes of our country. This particuar gentleman is none other than the Chief Election Commissioner. It has come to my notice that the Chief Election Commissioner could, some how or other, persuade the Government at time to instal a CNN terminal in his house ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Can an hon. Member raise such issues against the Chief Election Commissioner, a constitunional office, He raised this question in the House, without ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: But I have been permitted.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me find out.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Not only the CNN terminal in his house but I also understand, he got a telephone installed in his car. I have no idea whether these high technology gadgets are necessary in the discharge of his duties as the Chief Election Commissioner. I would like to know from the Government ... (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: He cannot make such allegations.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is only mentioning about the wasteful expenditure...

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: But this is an allegation. Who is there to defend him? He is not here in the House to defend himself.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: But it is a statement of fact. It has appeared in the press. It is a statement of fact. I wanted to know from the Government by way of interpolation about these facts. But somehow or other, this question was disallowed. So I have no other course except is make a special mention.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister wants to say something.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): The hon. Member just now mentioned that this was rejected by the Chairman when he raised the same issue in the form of a question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Chairman did not reject. The Chairman does not reject a question.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: This is what he said.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: The Chair has permitted me to mention about the wasteful expenditure incurred by the Government. It has come to my knowledge that ... (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have taken the views of the Secretary-General and he says that it is within the rules that a Member can talk about the extra expenditure incurred by the Chief Election Commissioner or anybody in the Government.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: He is talking about the conduct ... (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The conduct is not being discussed. I will not permit anybody to question the conduct of the Election Commissioner. But if the Member feels that some extra expenditure is being incurrred... (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Then, he can talk about the President's expenditure.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Nobody is discussing about the President.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: I am drawing the attention of the Government to this wasteful expenditure. I would like to know whether the Government sanctioned this expenditure or not.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You conclude and confine yourself to be expenditure only.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: I would like to know whether these high-tech gadgets are necessary for the discharge of the duties of the Chief Election Commissioner. What is the amount being spent by the Government to provide these facilities in the house and in the cars of the Chief Election Commissioner? I also

[Shri Mentay Padmanabham]

came to know that some of the Ministers of the previous Government have also got installed CNN terminals in their houses. Also some of the senior Secretaries of the Government have also got installed these CNN terminals in their houses at the expense of the Government. Is it being allowed by the Government? I would like to know whether these extra gadgets which were installed in the houses of the senior Secretaries and former Ministers and, particularly, in the house of the Chief Election Commissioner would be removed. I would like to know what the reaction of the Government is.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That matter is closed ... (*Interruptions*) No cross-talk, please.

Escape of a prisoner from Tihar jail

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH (Maharashtra): Madam, this is regarding the news that appeared in today's *Indian Express*. The caption is "Tihar captive goes on 'French leave'. The fact was that on last Saturday, a prisoner could walk out wearing the uniform of an Assistant Superintendent of Police. This is the first aspect. There are two aspects to it. The second aspect is much more serious. This young man who was an under-trial, in his twenties, was called by the Assistant Superintendent to give him massage. The officer went away inadvertently leaving his clothes there. This man put on his clothes and walked out of the jail. The sentry saluated him and he also in a casual way saluted him and walked away. How, the second aspect which I consider to be very serious is that in this very House from 1977 onwards, the matter regarding the ill-treatment of the prisoners, particularly the younger prisoners, was raised a number of times. There have been complaints in the newspapers about how these young prisoners have been kept in jail for 10 to 12 months. These young people are abused and misused. Their lives are destroyed. There have been different Prime Ministers. There have been different Governments. But there is no change. (*Interruptions*) Madam, I wish to draw the attention of the hon. House The Minister of State for Home is sitting here. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Shiv Shanker, I think you want to say something. I yield to you. I do not think you have had the experience of being in jail. But I have. I hope you do get sometimes. I was in the Tihar Jail.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER (Gujarat): Much worse is the massage part. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Madam, you cannot imagine the kind of mental and physical torture these young prisoners go through.

(*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Viren Shah is making a very important point about a criminal running away from the Tihar Jail.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: The whole House should take a serious note of this. There are many young prisoners in the Tihar Jail and some of them are there without any charge-sheet having been filed against them for fifteen months. Every fortnight, they are produced before the Magistrate who remands them to custody for another fortnight. This is what is happening. I would request at least this Government to take steps to improve the conditions of these young prisoners who are abused and misused. (*Interruptions*) The Goernment should take serious notice of this matter the treatment of the young prisoners in our jails. Their conditions should be improved. This is one thing.

Secondly, the Assistant Superintendent should be brought to book. Reports say that the Superintendent denied that any such thing had happened. He also denied of having given any police complaint which,